

Dear Senator Catherine Osten, Senator Paul Formica, and Representative Toni Walker:

My name is Michelle Johnson. I'm a citizen of Connecticut, and I urge you to reject the \$500,000 proposed budget cut to arts magnet schools in our state. I'm a former student of ACES Educational Center for the Arts, an arts magnet high school in New Haven.

I studied theater at ECA for all four years of high school. Now, I have two degrees from one of the top liberal arts schools in the country, have performed professionally, and am pursuing a career in theater and community outreach. I profoundly believe I would not have been able to accomplish what I have without the artistic and personal excellence I learned from the teachers and students at ECA. This school not only offers the superb artistic guidance of experienced and talented teachers but an academic philosophy that encourages critical thinking and social accountability. The school not only produces great artists but dedicated and generous citizens who actively give back to their communities.

Cutting the arts magnet high school budget would be huge blow to the students of this state as well as the communities they aim to enrich.

I urge you to stop the proposed \$500,000 budget cut to arts magnet schools in our state. Thank you.

Michelle Johnson